

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 CAPE T 00227 281659Z

45

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 COME-00 MC-02 ACDA-05 PM-03

TRSE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 L-02 OMB-01 DODE-00

/034 W

----- 099251

R 271540Z FEB 75

FM AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4431

INFO AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAPE TOWN 0227

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAIR, ETRD, SF

SUBJ: POSSIBLE SALE OF SIKORSKY S-65 HELICOPTERS TO

SOUTH AFRICAN FIRM

REF: CAPE TOWN 221

1. (BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL) COURT HELICOPTER'S GENERAL MANAGER, D. TODD, ACCOMPANIED BY AMCIT STEPHEN PERCY, MANAGER - COMMERCIAL MARKETING, SIKORSKY AIRCRAFT, STRATFORD, CONNECTICUT CALLED ON ECON OFFICER FEBRUARY 26. THEY CAME TO EXPLAIN COURT HELICOPTER'S REASONS FOR INTEREST IN SIKORSKY S-65S, EXTENT TO WHICH DISCUSSIONS HAD PROGRESSED WITH SIKORSKY, AND TO INQUIRE WHETHER U.S. GOVERNMENT WOULD PERMIT SALE OF THIS HELICOPTER FOR PURPOSES OUTLINED IN SIKORSKY LETTER TO DEPARTMENT.

2. TODD EXPLAINED THAT HIS COMPANY HAS HAD EXTENSIVE NIGHT AND DAY EXPERIENCE WITH S-61 AND OTHER SIKORSKY HELICOPTERS (PURCHASED BY FORMER COURT LINE IN LONDON) AND BELIEVES IT HAS THE CAPABILITY TO OPERATE AND MAINTAIN THE MUCH LARGER S-65 WHICH WOULD BE REQUIRED TO TOW OR ASSIST DISABLED VLCCS AND PREVENT GROUNDING AND POLLUTION OF SOUTH AFRICAN COASTLINE. IF FURTHER STUDY OF PERFORMANCE AND TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS INSURES S-65 IS SUIT-
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 CAPE T 00227 281659Z

ABLE, AND IF HELICOPTERS CAN BE SOLD TO COURT HELICOPTERS FOR

PURPOSE STATED, THE COMPANY WOULD THEN APPROACH MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT, WHICH HAS GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR POLLUTION CONTROL AND PREVENTION. HE SAID THE MINISTRY'S CURRENT EFFORTS IN THIS REGARD ARE LIMITED TO POLLUTION CONTROL SURFACE VESSELS OPERATED UNDER CONTRACT WITH SAFMARINE, AND TO PROGRAM BEING WORKED OUT WITH LOCAL OIL COMPANIES TO MINIMIZE POSSIBILITIES OF TANKER ACCIDENTS AND SPILLAGE. HE SAID CALTEX IS COORDINATING THIS PROGRAM AND COMPANIES ARE ANXIOUS TO MINIMIZE POLLUTION RISKS.

3. TODD INDICATED HE EXPECTED THE MINISTRY WOULD BE RECEPTIVE TO COURT COMPANY'S PROPOSAL BECAUSE OF GROWING CONCERN THAT LARGE NUMBER OF LOADED CRUDE CARRIERS PASSING SOUTH AFRICAN COAST CARRIES INHERENT RISK OF ACCIDENT OR GROUNDING WITH PROBABILITY OF SERIOUS COASTLINE POLLUTION. IN THIS CONNECTION HE NOTED THAT ONLY RECENTLY ONE SUCH INCIDENT WAS AVOIDED WHEN COURT'S S-61 SIKORSKY DELIVERED REPLACEMENT TURBINE PARTS TO DISABLED TANKER NO MORE THAN THREE MILES OFF HOUT BAY NEAR CAPE TOWN. THIS DEMONSTRATED NEED FOR EXTENDING CAPABLE HELICOPTER SERVICE TO OTHER PORTS BEYOND REACH OF CAPE TOWN AND TO NEED FOR TOWING OR HOLDING CAPABILITY IN EVENT SHIP CANNOT IMMEDIATELY EFFECT REPAIRS WHEN DISABLED.

4. TODD EXPLAINED CHANGE IN DECISION TO PROCEED NOW RATHER THAN LATER WITH INQUIRY TO U.S. GOVERNMENT AS MATTER OF REALIZATION BY COURT HELICOPTER'S MANAGEMENT THAT IT DID NOT WANT TO DEVELOP FULL PROPOSAL FOR MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT ONLY TO LEARN AT LAST STAGE OF NEGOTIATIONS THAT APPROVAL FOR SIKORSKY SALE WAS NOT POSSIBLE. PERCY ADDED THAT THIS WAS REASON SIKORSKY HAD SOUGHT PRELIMINARY REVIEW AND APPROVAL FROM THE DEPARTMENT, SINCE UNITED AIRCRAFT WAS ALSO RELUCTANT TO COMMIT TIME AND MONEY TO PROJECTED SALE UNLESS THERE WAS LIKELIHOOD OF U.S.G. APPROVAL.

5. ECON OFFICER GAVE TODD LETTER CONTAINING SUBSTANCE PARA ONE ONLY AND QUESTIONS (A) THROUGH (F) OF PARA TWO IN STATE 36427 PLUS COMMERCIAL QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PREPARATION OF CURRENT WTDR. TODD DID NOT ANTICIPATE ANY DIFFICULTY IN PROVIDING INFORMATION AND ASSURANCES REQUESTED AND AGREED CONTACT US AGAIN AFTER REFERRAL TO COMPANY MANAGEMENT. (END CONFIDENTIAL) CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 CAPE T 00227 281659Z

6. ACCORDING TO PRESS AND TRADE JOURNAL REPORTS, COURT LINE HELICOPTERS WAS TAKEN OVER BY LOCAL CONSORTIUM FOLLOWING COLLAPSE OF PARENT COMPANY IN U.K. ASIDE FROM CHANGE IN NAME, THE COMPANY CONTINUES TO OPERATE AS BEFORE, PROVIDING EXTENSIVE OFFSHORE AERIAL SUPPLY SERVICE TO PASSING SHIPS, PLUS LOCAL CHARTER SERVICE. COMPANY ALSO PROVIDES VOLUNTARY ASSISTANCE TO NATIONAL SEA RESCUE INSTITUTE. OWNERSHIP OF NEW COMPANY IS REPORTEDLY

SHARED BY MURRAY AND STEWART AND THE VAN ZYL FAMILY, HEADED BY J.J.M. VAN ZYL, FORMER CHAIRMAN OF THE COMPANY. NEW CHAIRMAN IS D.E. BAKER, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF MURRAY AND STEWART, LARGE CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTORS, WITH SHIP REPAIR INTERESTS AT CAPE TOWN AND OFFSHORE LAUNCH SERVICE, DIVING AND SALVAGE, AT CAPE TOWN, DURBAN AND PORT ELIZABETH. PARENT COMPANY IS MURRAY AND ROBERTS HOLDINGS LTD., JOHANNESBURG.
GAMON

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SALES, POLICIES, HELICOPTERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975CAPET00227
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750071-0549
From: CAPE TOWN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t1975028/aaaaagsi.tel
Line Count: 123
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 CAPE TOWN 221
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: KelleyW0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <01 JUL 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <12 NOV 2003 by KelleyW0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POSSIBLE SALE OF SIKORSKY S-65 HELICOPTERS TO SOUTH AFRICAN FIRM
TAGS: EAIR, ETRD, SF, US, (TODD, DAVID E M)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006